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SUBJECT: ELECTION RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

Classified By: Ambassador Roger Meece. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (U) Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) President Malu Malu provided a briefing to members of the International Committee to Accompany the Transition (CIAT) at the regular weekly CIAT meeting November 2. Among the highlights of his presentation:

a) Work to tabulate results from the October 29 elections is proceeding generally well. The CEI should be in a position to begin to post initial vote counts per established procedures by the end of the week.

b) The CEI has set up a daily 12 noon meeting involving senior representatives from both President Kabila's and Vice President Bemba's groups to discuss the CEI's ongoing work and any outstanding issues, and to answer questions. It is hoped that these meetings will help to minimize subsequent protests or complaints based on misunderstandings, rumors, or other inaccurate information.

c) The High Media Authority (HAM) is also cooperating with the CEI, and will participate in the daily noon meetings as appropriate. Already the HAM met with media representatives regarding ongoing media issues, and jointly sponsored a communique with the CEI, also signed by the two candidates' representatives, regarding media issues (septel).

¶2. (C) Among the agreements already discussed in the first daily meeting, Malu Malu reported an interesting accord in principle under which the two presidential campaign camps would identify lists of those inclined toward inflammatory statements, in essence agreeing to block all access to Congolese media by those on the list. Candidate representatives reportedly agreed that they would produce the list(s), rather than asking the HAM to propose names. (Comment: Insofar as the two groups do come up with what amounts to a mutually-agreed list of the most problematic extremists supporting Kabila and Bemba, it should provide interesting reading. End comment).

¶3. (U) CIAT members will be visiting the Kinshasa central tabulation and compilation center on Friday afternoon, November 3 to get a first-hand look at the set-up and work being done.

¶4. (C) UN SRSG Swing also informed CIAT members that former Presidents Abu Bakr (Nigeria), Jerry Rawlings (Ghana), Phillipe Buyoya (Burundi), and Sam Nujoma (Namibia) would be arriving in Kinshasa on Friday, November 3. The primary objective of the visit will be to speak with the two presidential candidates and others in the interests of maintaining calm as election results are announced and as a

new elected President and government are installed. The four former presidents plan to be in Kinshasa at least through Sunday, November 5. As of late November 2, there was yet no public announcement of this visit.

5 (C) EU Great Lakes Special Envoy Aldo Ajello reported that President Kabila told him in a meeting earlier in the day that Kabila was ready to meet with Vice President Bemba in the interests of maintaining order in coming days and weeks. In subsequent discussion, CIAT members noted that the pending visit of the four African ex-presidents would provide an excellent opportunity to build on Kabila's expressed availability to ensure such a meeting takes place in a positive atmosphere.

15. (C) Comment: None of the actions or initiatives reported in themselves represent the definitive guarantee of continued Kinshasa calm during the current period awaiting election results. In combination with a series of other agreements, however, they all represent very useful steps toward a peaceful and successful conclusion to the DRC's Transition and electoral process. Possibly both candidates and their key counselors had a chance to peer into the abyss during the August 20 - 22 violence, and found a consequent new will to pursue a different path. Certainly the tone and specifics of the various actions are encouraging. End comment.  
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